

Press Release

HARFORD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Office of Economic Development



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EDUCATION

"Preparing Now,
Building for the Future"

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"Growing and Sustaining
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"Protecting Our
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QUALITY LIVING

"Safeguarding What is
Important to Harford
County Citizens"

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Harford County Announces New Program to Connect, Grow Small Businesses

(Bel Air, MD) - - Harford County Executive David R. Craig and James Richardson, director of the Office of Economic Development, have announced Harford County's newest initiative, "Entrepreneurs Edge," to help small and family owned businesses.

"The goal of Entrepreneurs Edge is to provide a coordinated and enhanced effort to support and increase the growth of start-up businesses in Harford County," said County Executive Craig. "We have a great county with an already strong economic base, and we are looking to grow our business community, especially small businesses which are the lifeblood of any thriving economy," Craig remarked.

Partnering with the Harford County Office of Economic Development will be Harford County Public Library, Harford County Chamber of Commerce, Harford Community College, Small Business Development Center and Harford Business Innovation Center. Harford County Public Library will become a significant point of entry for entrepreneurs and will assist in the entrepreneur's growth and development.

"The local library is a great starting point and provides easy access to citizens and business owners alike to discuss business concepts and ideas and connect with critical resources to help transform an idea into a real business opportunity," said Mr. Richardson, the Office of Economic Development director.

Harford County Public Library will serve as the first point of contact for those interested in creating business opportunities. The library serves many purposes including collecting data, working with clients to familiarize them with various data bases plus helping clients focus efforts, encouraging them to participate in county-sponsored training sessions, and reaching out to other partners in the Entrepreneurs Edge process to provide on-going support for entrepreneurs.

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For those interested in moving forward with their plan to start a business, Harford County will offer “cutting-edge” training provided by the Office of Economic Development, Small Business Development Center, Harford County Chamber of Commerce and Harford Community College. The training includes establishing goals and objectives as well as best business practices.

Part of the on-going commitment to prospective business clients is to inform them of various training programs available through Harford Community College, Harford County Public Library business programming and Harford Business Innovation Center.

As potential business clients prepare to launch their new ventures, a support group of business professionals led by OED staff will work with these clients on areas such as developing a business plan, obtaining incorporation status and developing an action plan to move their business initiative forward.

A “Boost Team” lead by the president of the Harford County Chamber of Commerce will help move business clients forward with their business plan, and those with capital ready to initiate “start up” will be assisted in bringing their businesses to the market.

An “Accelerate Team” lead by OED personnel will help business clients move forward with “incubator” application, further market research, as appropriate, and finally move the business client to the market place.

As part of the on-going process in supporting new business growth, Harford Community College will conduct four training sessions per year related to start-up businesses. HCC will also support on-going research needs and will assist in identifying additional resources need by the entrepreneur.

“Harford County is adopting a holistic approach to business generation and the ‘Entrepreneurs Edge’ provides new business clients with a variety of tools and expertise to help them get started,” said County Executive Craig. “Harford County is business friendly, and we are always exploring new ways and technology to help us capitalize on expanding business opportunities. We are doing our part in helping to promote and grow the American Dream,”

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For more information about “Entrepreneurs Edge” and business opportunities in Harford County, contact the Harford County Office of Economic Development at harfordbusiness.org; Harford County Chamber of Commerce at harfordchamber.org; Small Business Development Center at harford.edu/sbdc; Harford Business Innovation Center at harfordbic.com; Harford Community College at harford.edu or Harford County Public Library at hcplonline.org.

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“Preserving Harford’s past; promoting Harford’s future”